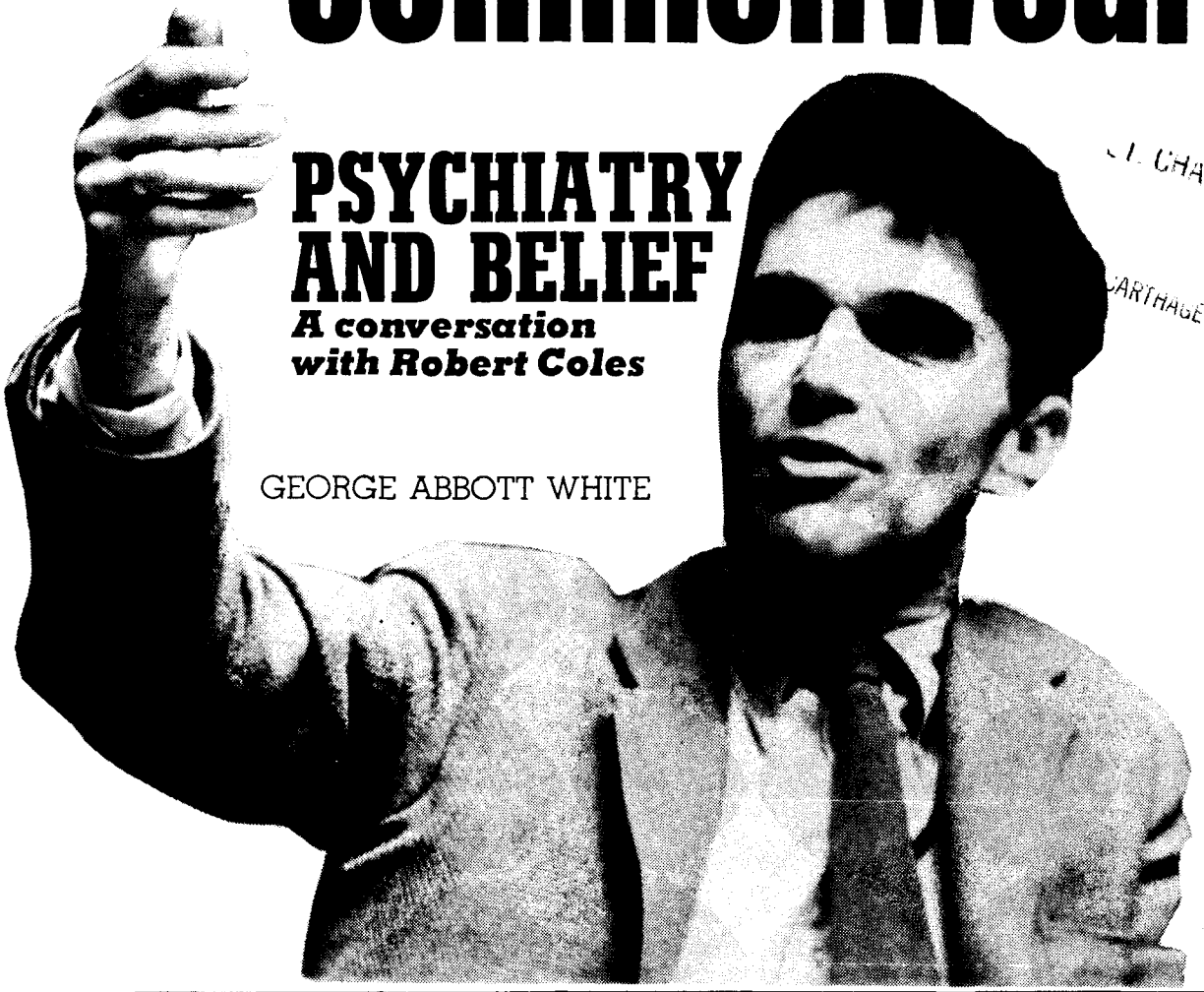
Volume XCVII No. 4 October 27, 1972 40 cents

commonweal



PSYCHIATRY AND BELIEF

A conversation with Robert Coles

GEORGE ABBOTT WHITE

ST. CHARLES SEMINARY LIBR
CARTHAGENA STATION, CELINA, OHIO

FALL BOOK ISSUE

REVIEWS:

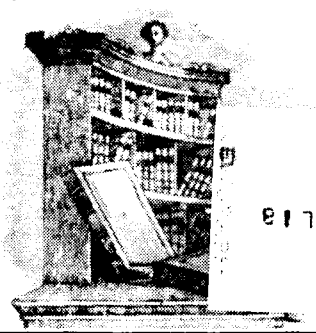
BERNARD BERGONZI on Vietnam Novels
CLAIRE HAHN on Current Criticism
CHARLES BRADY on Flannery O'Connor
JOHN FANDEL on Frederick Morgan
RICHARD NEUHAUS on The Car Thief
RAYMOND SCHROTH

THE ROAD TO ??? WITH SARGE

STEVEN V. ROBERTS

CHILDREN'S HOURS

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.



ST CHARLES SEMINARY LIB
CARTHAGENA STATION
CELINA OH 45822

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEWS & VIEWS

Parochial School Aid

If the tax-credits idea exhausts the serious legal possibilities for substantial public aid to private and parochial schools, as some believe, what route is open for proponents of nonpublic schools in getting relief for their financially hard-pressed educational system?

In Congressman John M. Ashbrook's opinion, the "proper route"—indeed, only route— is via a constitutional amendment, to "let the people decide."

Ashbrook (R.-Ohio) believes that recent Supreme Court decisions have wiped out perhaps even the tax-credits prospect. Certainly, he says, they are of "doubtful constitutionality."

In saying this, Ashbrook also scores those who "hold out the false illusion of proffers of assistance which cannot be constitutionally implemented." Ashbrook doesn't name names, but one might make deductions from the timing of his remarks and the setting: the floor of the House in the midst of a Presidential campaign in which the principals are vying with one another in promising private and parochial school aid.

"The pitfalls of aid to private and parochial schools would seem to mandate a clear-cut necessity of amending the Constitution if any aid of this type is ever to be considered," Ashbrook commented in his speech in the House.

Ashbrook's constitutional-amendment suggestion is novel, but not one that Catholic school officials are apt to rally 'round. It affords neither time nor strong chance of success. With Catholic schools closing at a rate of more than one a day, time is particularly pressing.

The College Scene

For Catholic college partisans, there's good news and bad news.

The bad news: Dunbarton College, a Washington, D.C., school founded in 1935 by the Sisters of the Holy Cross to aid working girls of the depression era, will close next summer because of financial problems.

This will be the second of the order's three colleges to close in a year's time. Cardinal Cushing College in Brookline, Mass., folded last June. This leaves the Sisters of the Holy Cross with only St. Mary's College at Notre Dame, Ind.

A Dunbarton official attributed the college's financial problems in part to a failure to attract a full enrollment. This failure was attributed, in turn, to a lack of interest in non-coeducational and religious schools.

The good news: Boston College, a Jesuit institution, closed its fiscal year with a balanced budget for the first time since 1968.

The college lost $466,000 in 1968, and $3.6 million, $3.8 million and $988,000 the succeeding years.

Revenues and expenditures for 1971-72 balanced out at $34.4 million.

The balancing was not without pain, however, for there was a $260 per student tuition increase and a freeze on faculty salaries.

Honoring the Deserving

The 75th year is shaping up as a banner one for the person aptly termed "American Catholicism's reigning First Lady" by *America's* book editor, John B. Breslin. Who else, but Dorothy Day?

Curtis publishers will reissue in November *The Long Loneliness,* Dorothy's autobiography, and *Loaves and Fishes,* a history of the Catholic Worker movement, and at the same time bring out *On Pilgrimage: The Sixties,* an original collection from the diary/journal which appears in the *Catholic Worker.*

Liveright will publish this fall *A Harsh and Dreadful Love: Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* by William D. Miller. And Doubleday has James Finn at work on a book that will be both biography of Dorothy and history of the movement.

Meanwhile, the Newman Alumni Association of CCNY presented its ninth annual medallion to Dorothy Day at ceremonies earlier this month at the City University Graduate Center.

Its citation singled out Dorothy Day as "persistent and tireless worker in feeding, clothing and sheltering thousands of needy," as a "philosophical anarchist and ardent supporter of nonviolence and pacifism," and "for her leadership and prophetic attitudes, inspired by a mature and profound Christian commitment."

From the Shoulder

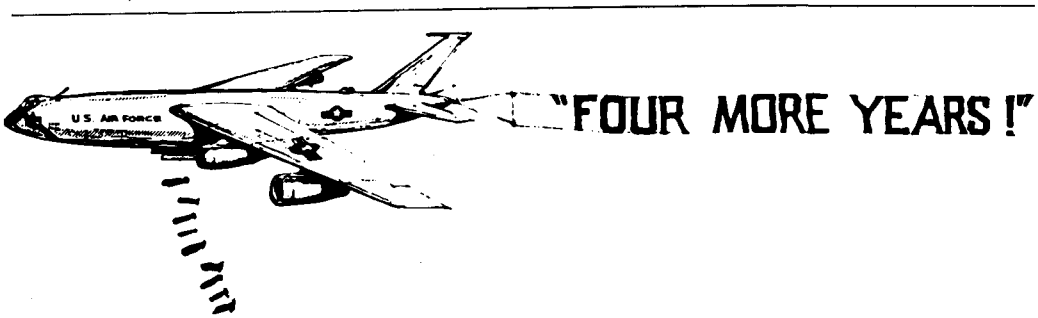
The *Washington Post's* conclusion to an editorial on the Watergate "caper" and attendant Republican "dirty tricks":

"Sen. McGovern's people have been accused only of running around with loose tongues. The operatives in behalf of the re-election of the President were apparently running around with loose guns, committing squalid crimes, arrogantly ignoring law and minimal decency. Mr. Nixon can't have it both ways. Either he was responsible for these crimes committed in his behalf by his agents or he was not. If he was not, it amounts to a breathtaking confession of managerial incompetence and a gross abdication of responsibility."

Odds and Ends

—Hoa Binh Press, a venture of friends of the Vietnamese pacifist movement, has published *Only the Rice Loves You,* James Forest's narrative of a month spent with the Vietnamese peace delegation in Paris. Available, by contribution, from Hoa Binh Press, c/o Quaker Project, 13 East 17th Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10003.

—Pro Ecclesia, the way-right Catholic lay group based in New York, announces that it "is presently engaged in, or considering, a Catholic anti-defamation league, a national essay contest, a pilgrimage of reparation to St. Augustine, Fla., the promotion of classical Catholic books, the establishment of readings rooms and libraries," etc. If you're wondering about the St. Augustine, Fla., thing, there's a shrine there to Our Lady of Leche. "That's Spanish for milk," explains Pro Ecclesia executive director Timothy Mitchell. The pilgrimage, in the planning stage, will be "in reparation for the abortion business." JOHN DEEDY



Auth/L.A. News Advocate/LNS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Nixon's Theology

Taos, N.M.

To the Editors: The prominence you gave "The (Social) Gospel according to 1. Richard Nixon 2. George McGovern" by Charles P. Henderson, Jr. [Sept. 29], fills me with dismay as well as loss of confidence in your judgment.

No mention was made in the article of the methods used by Mr. Nixon in "hacking" his way to the top. Mr. Nixon's attacks on Jerry Voorhis, Helen G. Douglas, Adlai Stevenson, in no way bespeak a true religious orientation. His reckless, unfounded charges have caused harm beyond measure and yet Mr. Henderson chooses to ignore them. I wonder why? Re Mr. Henderson's new book: *The Nixon Theology* is a title thoroughly inappropriate if not downright hypocritical—presuming that its content can be judged from his unfortunate article in the Sept. 29th issue of *Commonweal.*

(MRS.) STEPHEN A. MITCHELL

Berkeley, Calif.

To the Editors: I think the Henderson piece [Sept. 29] is a beautiful job. Such an article is the best service that a religious journal can render in the context of the election.

(REV.) JOHN C. BENNETT

CORRECTION

In D. Gareth Porter's Oct. 13 article, "Catholic Bloodbath in Vietnam?," a reference was omitted in the ninth line on page 40 concerning the contention that "the threat of atomic weapons was apparently taken seriously by many Vietnamese." The printed article dropped the words that Tran Trung made the observation "in the conservative Catholic newspaper *Xay Dung.*"

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

NEWS & VIEWS: 74 **CORRESPONDENCE: 75**
EDITORIALS: 75
THE ROAD TO ??? WITH SARGE: *Steven V. Roberts* **76**
PSYCHIATRY AND BELIEF: A CONVERSATION WITH ROBERT COLES: *George Abbott White* **76**
VIETNAM NOVELS: FIRST DRAFT: *Bernard Bergonzi* **84**
VERSE: *John Druska* **88**
THE SCREEN: *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.*
BOOKS: *Claire Hahn, John Fandel, Charles A. Brady, Richard John Neuhaus, Raymond A. Schroth* **89**
ILLUSTRATIONS: *Photographs of Robert Coles on front cover and page 78: Jerry Murphy*

JAMES O'GARA: *Editor* JOHN DEEDY: *Managing Editor*
RAYMOND A. SCHROTH: *Assistant Editor* ANNE ROBERTSON: *Editorial Assistant*
PHILIP T. HARTUNG, COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.: *Movies* JOHN FANDEL: *Poetry*
BRIAN WICKER: *Great Britain* ALAIN WOODROW: *Paris*
HENRY TEN KORTENAAR: *Rome* JOHN HORGAN: *Dublin*
LOUIS MICHAEL COLONNESE: *Latin America*

EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Publisher* JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

COMMONWEAL *A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts.*
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published weekly,
except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and June to mid-September,
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1972 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada: $14 a year. Foreign $16. Single copies 40¢

JADED AMERICA

The Watergate affair and events unfolding around it—the suitcase of money in Mexico, the forged letters, leaked medical data, tails on Democratic candidates, undercover agents and sabotaging of Democratic campaign operations—read like some new fantasy of Washington politics by novelist Allen Drury. But truth, the old cliché tells us, is stranger than fiction, and there is no need to be doubtful in this instance. *Time* magazine speculates that the whole shabby business engineered by the Committee to Re-elect the President adds up to "what may be the first documented case of political espionage in our history." The *Washington Post* charges that the nation's electoral process is being subverted through a calculated effort "to confuse, confound and corrupt" the free choice by which the electorate should be making its selection about who is to govern the country during the next four years. Neither *Time* nor the *Washington Post* appears to exaggerate.

The wonder of this incredible situation, however, is not only in the deeds done, but in the apathetic reaction to the revelations. The maneuverings in Washington to foil attempts at investigation by Rep. Wright Patman's House Banking Committee and Sen. Edward Kennedy's Senate Judiciary Subcommittee are in character; a blatant politics is at work here, and it is not unknown for politics to supersede larger considerations. But how does one account for the almost total public indifference to the Watergate and related incidents? A few years ago the gift of a vicuna coat to a Washington official could so stir the public as to rock an Administration to its foundations, when the news became known. Today a jaded people responds neither with anger nor marked concern to a matter which transcends the avarice of a particular individual and cuts to the heart of the nation's delicate election processes.

The jading of America has, of course, a wide network of roots, beginning with Vietnam. A nation that can come to live with that on its conscience is hardly likely to get wrought up over some nasty political tricks. Nor is a populace that has been inured to bugging, spying and espionage by the political war at home against the peace movement and the counterculture generation apt to protest instinctively the invasion of constitutional rights which these activities involve. So politicians bug, spy and seek to mess up their opponents' campaigns; what else is new? And, alas, there is that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

creeping sense of futility about being unable to change things through traditional political processes. Administrations come and Administrations go, but the war continues and domestic problems not only persist, they multiply and accelerate in intensity. If one Administration is the same as another, a certain ennui becomes understandable.

The especially regrettable thing about the ennui of the moment is that this year the American people have what is perhaps the best opportunity to effect real change in the country since 1932. The choice between Nixon and McGovern is that clear. But how does one snap the country out of its resignation to status quo's and fire the indignation that says, 'no more Vietnams, no more Watergates, no more politics of neglect and cynicism'? The answer to that question rests largely with the ability of Sen. McGovern to convey a sense of urgency to the voting public. But it also requires that the American people take their heads out of the sand and independently face the implications for country and world of four more years of Nixon.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

The Road to ??? With Sarge

It was a warm and sunny fall Sunday, the kind of day that always reminds me of college and football games and girls in plaid skirts and nubby sweaters, that vanished species that had to be back in the dorms by midnight. I was covering Sargent Shriver, the Democrats' pinch-runner for Vice President, and the day's events began with a rally in support of Soviet Jewry on the Ellipse, behind the White House. Jews have always been considered solid Democrats, but this year they are squeaking, and both parties take every opportunity to pour on the oil.

Mr. Shriver did not show up, but he sent his wife, the former Eunice Kennedy. Close your eyes, and she sounds uncannily like her brother, the President. "What we all need is love," she began, and went on to denounce the new Soviet system of demanding ransom for Jewish émigrés. She managed to mention that she and Sarge and the kids had visited Israel last Christmas, and then struggled valiantly through a few words of Hebrew: "For the sins we have committed by being silent."

The emissary of the Nixon Administration was George Bush, the lean and handsome Texan, once a conservative Congressman and now chief representative at the United Nations. The contrast could not have been more striking. On one hand a Kennedy, a link to the days of hope and optimism, to that era of decent, if sometimes misguided, liberalism. On the other, a drawling Marlboro man, a figure whose whole presence evoked thoughts of oil millionaires jetting around in private planes. Yet as I walked through this crowd of urban, well-educated Jews, most of them said they were voting for Nixon.

"I'm really very confused at this point," said a research scientist. "I'm not overly happy with McGovern. I've always been a Democrat, I've never voted Republican, but I may this time. I'm somewhat happy with Nixon's attitude toward Israel, even though I've never been happy with him before on any matter." When I asked about McGovern, the man's wife answered: "I'm not sure of him, I'm not sure I can trust him."

Another scientist, this one with a beard and a baby in backpack, told me: "The major thing is total disenchantment with both candidates. I've been unhappy with Nixon the past four years, but I'm equally unhappy with McGovern. He's backing off what he originally stood for. Originally he represented something new and honest and straightforward. But since the convention, he's been just another politician, he's been willing to tell lies just like Nixon is." Again, the wife was bothered more by vagueness than anything: "Better a devil you know, than a devil you don't know, sometimes." Not an auspicious beginning. If the Democrats cannot win a crowd at a rally like that, they cannot win anywhere.

Out at the airport Shriver's plane, The Fighting Lucky 7, was ready to take us to New Jersey. The Secret Service meticulously went through our luggage, a little reminder that half the reason the press followed Shriver was to be on hand in case of disaster. The networks each had a crew, but only the major magazines and newspapers bothered to send a reporter. Even United Press International, the second biggest news service, did not staff the trip—another small example of what happens when you fall 30 points behind in the polls.

Shriver has been trying to run for something for years —Senator from Illinois, Governor of Maryland—but when he was finally tapped he was a Washington lawyer without any experienced staff. His chief political aid is Mark Shields, a pudgy, funny astute young pol from Ohio who smiled through the devastation of Ed Muskie's efforts earlier this year. A few staffers are old Peace Corps buddies, or veterans of Shriver's strange adventure in 1970 campaigning for Congressional candidates.

As soon as we boarded the Lucky 7, the two stewardesses—complete with short, frosted hair and orange make-up—started serving hors d'oeuvres. On a campaign trip there is often no time to eat on the ground, so you subsist largely on airline food, a gastronomic nightmare that must be something like eating Big Macs for an entire week. Some staffer announced, "He's on." A newsman retorted wryly, "Can't you feel the electricity?" That's something else that happens when you're 30 points down—you lose the promise of power, a certain aura of importance.

Thirty minutes later we landed in Newark, and trans-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ferred to a helicopter for a quick trip to Parsippany, where the John F. Cryan Association was holding its annual picnic. Cryan is the sheriff of Essex County, the sort of old guard politician who felt abandoned by the McGovern minions, and part of Shriver's job is to herd such people back into the fold. As we landed in a grassy field, and Shriver stepped out of the chopper, I got my first good look at him. There is a touch of the Yale clubby about him—maybe it's his hair, it looks neat even when tousled—but he is an open and jovial guy, that combination of aristocracy and earthiness that always characterized his brothers-in-law. I felt the only thing to call him was "Sarge."

Immediately he was greeted by a man named Nick Caputo, whose expansive stomach swelled the sort of red and white sport shirt Sarge Shriver would never wear in a million years. Caputo is the clerk of Essex County, a national committeeman from New Jersey, an organization man. Shriver dealt regularly with such people in the 1960 campaign, and then as director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and he is basically a "regular" Democrat, just like the rest of the family. He gets along with Nick Caputo. "Some like to think there are two groups, the regulars and the McGovernites," shouted Caputo, "but today there is only one group, the Democratic group."

Sarge was in his shirtsleeves, moving through the crowd. It was a beer and softball group, truck drivers and government clerks and construction workers, and Shriver set off little sparks as he walked. The Kennedy charisma lives! But when he got to the microphone, it was dead—someone said later the wires had been cut—and few people could hear him. Shriver retreated to a private meeting with party officials, and I had a chance to talk to some of the audience.

The first person I encountered was a labor official, and he was very blunt. "I can't see McGovern or Shriver, either one. To me, they represent the giveaway programs," he said. The man was a "lifelong Democrat," and he acknowledged that Nixon represented the "corporations." Then he added: "But if it's a choice between the corporate image and the giveaway image, I'll take the lesser of two evils and vote for Nixon."

A few minutes later I heard a beery voice behind me. It's not the Democratic party," the voice railed, "it's the McGovern party, they stole it from us." Those hard feelings belonged to Joe Flatley, a truck driver, who was arguing with his two brothers. "We're left out," he went on, "there's nothing for us. McGovern listens to the abortionists, the acid heads, the longhairs, everything I detest in America. . . ."

David Flatley, a purchasing agent, the only brother wearing a tie, tried to defend the Democrats. "All through the years, since 1932, the Democrats have done more for the working man," he insisted. "Nixon is so far from the working man, no working man should vote for that guy." The words had little effect. Michael Flatley joined the verbal battle, and also came out against McGovern. "I can't stand a squirming, squiggly son of a bitch as President of the United States." What about Shriver? "When he gives his fortune to the poor," Michael snarled, "then he has my vote."

Sarge emerged as ebullient as ever from his meeting. The purpose, he said, had been to "put the pieces together," and he proclaimed success. The Essex leaders said they wanted him back again to campaign. They also asked for Ted Kennedy, and John Pastore, the Italian Senator from Rhode Island. What about McGovern? Oh, yes, of course, oh sure. . . . Then it was off to Philadelphia.

That night, Shriver had dinner in his hotel with Peter J. Camiel, the boss of Philadelphia, and John Shea, one of Camiel's lieutenants. After they were finished, Sarge went to tape a TV show and meet with the editors of a local paper; I sought out Camiel. He was dressed like a banker in somber grey—supposedly he is one of the biggest beer distributors in Philadelphia.

Camiel professed confidence. Registration figures showed Democrats ahead 2½ to 1, which is better than the normal rate. They are not doing that, he insisted. "because they feel any antipathy to the party's Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates."

Shriver, Camiel said, was a "clear thinking man, a wonderful asset to the ticket." What advice did Camiel give him? "The same advice I gave McGovern," he answered. "There has to be a clear understanding on the part of the people what they mean by their programs. They have to clarify issues in terms of what people can understand." I asked Camiel what those issues were in Philadelphia, and he answered this way:

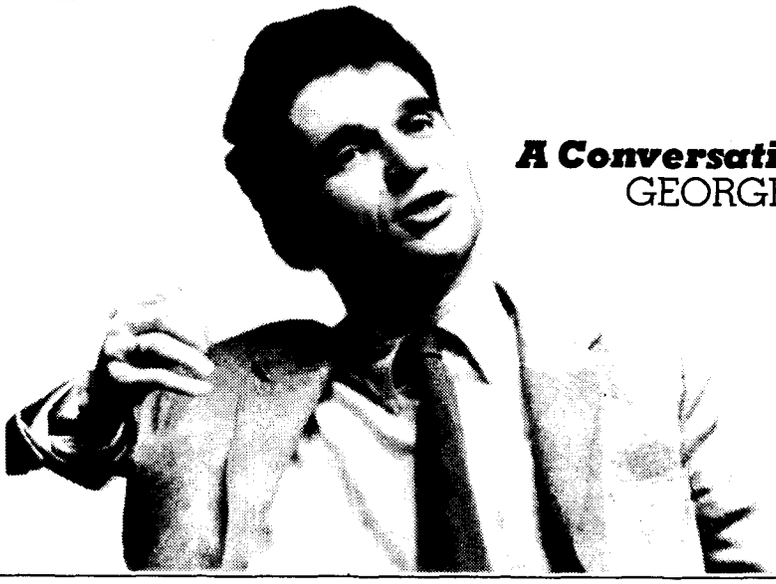
"People want a peaceful neighborhood, they don't want to feel they have to barricade the door to protect their wife. They want the opportunity to give their children more than they have had. And they want the burden of taxation reduced. It's that simple, and if people think it's more complicated than that, they're crazy."

In one way, Camiel is right, in another, the issues are much more complex. What it comes down to, in places like Essex County and Philadelphia, is a deep and direct conflict—between ties of loyalty and ties of fear, between the past and the present, between economics and emotion. For a man like Pete Camiel, the choice is relatively easy. His whole life has been bound up with the Democratic party, he has a vested interest in its success, from the courthouse, as they say, to the White House. A few floors above him, Sarge Shriver was telling an interviewer that the Republicans had doubled unemployment, doubled the welfare rolls, sent prices soaring. It all sounded good. But out there, in that dark city, was anybody listening? STEVEN V. ROBERTS

(Steven V. Roberts is chief of the New York Times' *Los Angeles bureau.)*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PSYCHIATRY AND BELIEF



A Conversation with Robert Coles

GEORGE ABBOTT WHITE

*What began earlier this year as a discussion about the "political" content of Robert Coles' latest two books—*Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers, *and* The South Goes North, Volumes II and III *of* Children of Crisis *(Atlantic-Little, Brown)—rapidly grew into a series of conversations that ranged, geographically, from Coles' white frame home in pastoral Concord to his crowded office in the basement Annex of the Harvard University Health Services, where he is a research psychiatrist. While the "Middle Americans," Daniel Berrigan, the Movement, the war in Vietnam, moved in and out of focus, questions of faith and belief seemed not only at the center of both minds, but the very thread that tied all the other people and concerns together.*

WHITE: Last October writing of William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* in *The New Republic*, you noted James' personal and professional indecision about faith and yet his willingness to portray with sympathy, even generosity, the entire range of "religious" experience. You also recalled your own "snide, unbelieving remarks . . . clever psychological interpretations . . . quick dismissals of this or that . . ." in the book's margins. How is it that you came to read that book, at Harvard, in the late Forties, with Perry Miller?

COLES: It was a course called "Classics of the Christian Tradition" and I was only 18 years old and Miller opened it to 50 people and interviewed every single one of them before he let them in. "Will you be able to stand this?" he asked me. "Most of your colleagues will be veterans, will have fought four or five years. I'm afraid you're going to be all alone."

WHITE: The Veterans had asked him to do the course and apparently they evoked something in him. But I thought Miller was without religious belief?

COLES: That may well be true . . . Although you know a person like that can be the instrument of another's belief. He helped a lot of confused veterans by introducing Pascal and Kierkegaard very thoughtfully, and then, of course, the Puritan divines. He made them real, their ethical struggles and religious doubts alive. I was struggling and shy and he was generous and kind, to all of us. He treated us like kings and took our own predicaments seriously.

WHITE: Those "predicaments" reoccur in *The Geography of Faith* (1971) in an ironic way. A friend, after reading the first few sections of the book, saw the opposition between you and Dan as one of pastoral and prophetic modes of being: on the one hand the minister or priest who needs to stay close to his flock and feels that if he goes too far ahead he won't have any touch at all, and on the other the minister or priest who feels that he must be prophetic to draw them out of where they are to a new reality. When I finished the book I had an image of you as an older now-gently, now-sternly cautioning priest, and Dan as some kind of idealistic young psychiatrist.

COLES: I think that's an interesting way of putting that, maybe there's a lot to that. Of course, I'm not a priest. Nor—and this should be emphasized—nor has

GEORGE ABBOTT WHITE *teaches at the Episcopal Theological School. A collection of essays he co-edited with Charles Newman,* Literature in Revolution, *was published in August.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

my role been or have I ever conceived myself as one who could ultimately supply for them, offer them, the kinds of coherence and consolation a priest offers them. I'm not being coy or modest about this. I know the limits of a social observer like me and I'm not an organizer either. But I think I have become a *friend* of the people I've worked with, and so far as you mention the pastoral obligation to stay close to people, I knew that unless I had at least discussed involvement with Dan and Phil—if they would see my name in the paper or learn that I was actively involved—I felt that this would have jeopardized what was anyway a difficult relationship. (It took me seven years to get into a situation which I think now is reasonably one of trust and confidence on both sides.)

And as far as the prophetic, remember that psychoanalysis was one more 20th century messianic sect. I say this, by the way, not to criticize the legitimate value and worth of psychiatric thinking. It's what happens when thinking and ideas become in the minds of one particular group of people more than that, become a *redemptive* experience for them and then a *prescriptive* experience which they demand of others. They demand that others go through it and they isolate those others if they haven't gone through it and tell them that until they go through it they're not the saved ones.

WHITE: Of course in our secular age—a world "come of age," in Bonhoeffer's phrase—religious salvation is no longer a "realistic" option. It's always thrown into the face of the faithful that Freud dispensed with "illusion" . . .

COLES: Oh, that's nonsense; really. Psychoanalysts have illusions just like others. One of Freud's illusions was that somehow more and more people would become psychoanalyzed and that way the world would become a better place. Well, maybe so—but frankly I doubt it. What I'm pointing out is that there was a utopian thread in his thinking. I don't criticize it. But I think Freud did *not* understand the nature of religious faith. He didn't feel it, yet he presumed to write about it in others with authority. That was a mistake—he became too theoretical; his genius, the most valuable part of his thinking, was that which emerged from his contact with patients. Those were the years of discovery. Towards the end of his life he became too preoccupied with social theory in such a way that rather than going out and talking with a lot of people whose religious faith was of some value to them, that he might have learned about, he came up with conclusions very much like Marx's: religion in some way an opiate. There he was detached from concrete experience with people of faith.

WHITE: That is certainly not the case with your work.
COLES: Yes, I guess religious concerns keep on coming up in my writing, as they have in my life. When I was in college and medical school I would slip off to churches, usually Catholic churches, because one could be left alone there, left to be with oneself, left to pray or sit and day-dream. The churches I went to as a boy, with my mother, were suburban churches, usually Episcopalian. Most of the people knew one another, or felt constrained to meet and talk afterwards. I know, it all had something to do with being part of a "community." And more and more Catholic churches resemble the Protestant churches I know so well—people link arms, turn around and address one another, feel responsive to each other. I have no right to criticize that development. Who am I, not a Catholic, to yearn for the church's past—a good deal of it, politically, rather unfortunate, though no less so than much of the history of our Protestant sects? Still, there should be room for "privacy" as well as "community" in a church, and why shouldn't our eyes be directed toward the altar, toward God, or be directed inward, in contemplation of God (within the mind's limited capacity to do so) rather than toward one's neighbors,

For just one hour on Sunday I should think we might have allowance to forget one another, forget the Rotary and the Lion's Club and the President and the Model Cities Act and yes, our need for "community," even our need for "community mental health." I'm not so sure, while I'm being so cranky, that I shouldn't add our theologians to that list; sometimes they, too, can keep us from Christ, even as they push and pull the church, and maybe upon occasion become (for priests and bishops as well as "ordinary" believers) confused with the Lord Himself. In that sense secular prophets aren't the only danger to the "man of faith"; the holy church itself is subject to its own temptations, and not all of them come from pagans or messianic secular cults.

WHITE: What you write indicates something deeper than a vague *ethical* concern. There is a sense of formality, a structure . . .
COLES: Well, that's right, I have studied theology—not in any full-time way, but at different points in my life, and sometimes, I might add, with some desperation. In medical school, during the '50's, I audited a course Reinhold Niebuhr gave, the last one before a stroke incapacitated him. I found it helpful to leave the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center and sit and listen to Niebuhr and his students at Union Theological Seminary. I didn't always understand what they were saying, but they would mention books, and I would go and hunt them down. It was Dr. Niebuhr who introduced me to Simone Weil, and that was a large gift to receive. In my last year of medical school I belonged to a Bible study group; there were five of us medical students, and we read and discussed sections from the New

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Testament. Two of those five are now medical missionaries. I was the agnostic or "devil's disciple," and I now realize how much I needed them, and perhaps how much they needed me, as we argued back and forth. I recall that the five of us, sitting there way up on top of Bard Hall, the student dormitory, holding on to our Bibles, surrounded by modern bustling Gotham, struck many of our classmates as an odd bunch indeed —and since we weren't a "group" then and we weren't out to "sensitize" each other, it wasn't all that bad in the Eisenhower era.

We just read and tried to make sense of what we read. After arguing skeptically for a couple of hours, I would retreat to my room and go over a passage from St. Paul, or especially, the Revelation of St. John the Divine, and find myself strangely moved, for which I had to apologize to myself. I'm sorry if this sounds childish or foolish. All I know is that during those years I was beginning to get interested in psychiatry, was in analysis, and so I had a very simple-minded if fashionable view of what religion was all about. Obsessions, illusions, rationalizations, neurotic guilt, masochistic "surrender"—those are the words that still summon so much of our interest, and correctly so, because there is a lot that goes on in the mind that such words (and the train of ideas that they are meant to summarize) manage to explain. Nevertheless, the world is larger than a psychiatrist's consulting room, something both he and his patients are all too likely to forget, and I suppose that the psychiatrist is especially obligated to remember that, because, after all, the patient has a right to be obsessed with himself, to be obsessed with his obsessions, so to speak—he comes to the doctor and declares himself a patient, hence to some degree more on the wrong track than he or she feels to be "right," or maybe than others think "appropriate." (Oh, these words, and all that they imply, and how treacherous they can be, not just abstractly, but to so many particular men and women—and as a child psychiatrist I would have to add children, too, because so often I have heard children, like the rest of us, wonder who is to be believed, who is "right" and who is "wrong," which standards are correct, and why.)

Anyway, in analysis the first time around, I heard my religious "concerns" (as you call them) called other things, given a series of psychological names. And I could only agree, or maybe "give in" is the expression. Later, in New Orleans, another psychoanalyst had a different way of looking at those "urges" I had—to go into St. Louis Cathedral there in Jackson Square and sit for a while. I think the doctor I was seeing—God bless him —used to try it himself, without finding it necessary to confess his sin to his colleagues, and submit himself to further analysis!

WHITE: In your conversations with Dan one more than sensed his appreciation or admiration for Bonhoeffer. That stands in marked contrast with the "realistic" Augustinian-Christian view of dependence and limitation, even sin, one finds in Niebuhr and Tillich.

COLES: I think Dan is more hopeful about the "nature" of man than Niebuhr and Tillich were. I studied with Tillich when I was a resident in psychiatry at the Massachusetts General Hospital, and Tillich had a seminar in "systematic theology." I went to see him and asked him if I could join up; I asked him if he'd mind if I sat and listened. He said no, but he'd mind if I didn't speak up. That was quite a year, learning to be "systematic" about some of my religious concerns from a man who, I believe, used the word "systematic" a little wryly. I loved his mixture of religious and political sensibility. He could combine hopefulness and skepticism almost uncannily. In that sense he was like Simone Weil—and Georges Bernanos.

WHITE: That is both a powerful and subtle linkage. The single item that connects the two for me is the letter she wrote to him during the Spanish Civil War, she condemning the atrocities of the Left while in solidarity with his condemnation of those of the Right. What does Bernanos call up for you?

COLES: I can't put into words what Bernanos means to me. I keep *The Diary of a Country Priest* near me, and go back to it often. Also, *Joy* and *Mouchette*. His political essays are sometimes way off kilter, but every once in a while right on the mark, rather like Orwell's. Bernanos was a passionate pilgrim; though utterly faithful to the church, he was plagued by doubts and even more, plagued by moments, many of them, in which he lost all charity and gave in to despair, and its not uncommon mask, or equivalent, scorn or sarcasm. I think he knew the Devil rather intimately. It's a pity that he is not better known in this country. I say this not to detract from the stature of Camus, but I really do think that Bernanos was a greater writer, and it does mean something, that in this country there is such a small audience for one like him and such a large and responsive audience for Camus or Sartre—and I would also contrast the attention Sartre gets with, say the response Emmanuel Mounier or Gabriel Marcel get from America's intellectuals.

WHITE: You've stressed how your "method" differs from, say Oscar Lewis'. I know there must be miles of tape and mountains of notes, yet each of the three volumes of *Children of Crisis* has an evocative quality one associates with a well-wrought novel; the concreteness, the vivid particularity, the profound unity. Which novelists do you admire?

COLES: Among living writers, Walker Percy is my favorite. I find myself going to his three novels over and over again; *The Last Gentleman,* especially, moved me—

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and very much unsettled me. I'd read five or ten pages, and have to stop. I've read Dr. Percy's philosophical articles, too; he comes across as a remarkable person, a wise man, a kind of decent man as well as a gifted man—and such qualities, naturally, don't always go together. For years, in the course of my work in New Orleans, I've wanted to try to go see him, but so far I've not had the courage to make the attempt. Another writer from the South I keep reading is Flannery O'Connor. We lived not far from her in Georgia, and I heard her speak once. The sentences were not unlike some she writes, and her painfully shy manner could not for long conceal the force and passion in her, and the spiritual life-and-death struggles she knew she was waging, not to mention the battle with a disease whose name (I hope I'm not being presumptuous) I think she might have smiled at—lupus erythematosus.

WHITE: Others?

COLES: Two, and that's it: James Agee and George Orwell. Some of my students tell me they were fussy and hopelessly "unrealistic," so far as politics go, but there has to be room in this world for people who

say "yes—but." Maybe I am *too* suspicious of ideologies, all of them; but I distrust those who turn any century's secular preoccupations, however valuable, into a faith—and I fear that not a few psychiatrists and political organizers and physicists are tempted to do so (in the name of the exploration of the unconscious, the improvement of the lot of the poor, or the struggle for mastery over "matter").

Orwell means so much *now* because he struggled so hard with these ambiguities: He struggled hard to know working class people as well as poor people; he struggled with the complexities of social life as it affects individuals and institutions and parties and movements; and he was a very *concrete* person. He may have been a poor novelist but he had a sense of the real.

WHITE: The achievement of the last two volumes is massive; they struck me as important and as rich and as moving as anything I'd read in the last two or three years. The praise seemed substantial though there was something missing.

COLES: I have been struck at the way those last chapters in each book ("Rural Religion" and "'The Lord in Our Cities") have been so thoroughly ignored, even by critics who have had only kind words to say about the books. I deliberately chose to end the books with those chapters, and in a way struggled harder with them than any others—even as the people I have worked with have to fight hard to make sense of this world, and find some "meaning" in it. I have been urged to come up with more "conclusions," more "formulations" about what it is like for poor people, how they think, What goes on in their heads. We hunger after tidy abstractions—and so often they are used to *do in* people, thoroughly do them in. Meanwhile, the sharecroppers or hill people of West Virginia I have spent time with, or the people in our Northern ghettos I have visited, have their own ideas about life and its purposes—yet some of us who say we are "for" them, or working on their "behalf," or trying to "organize" them, are not always that anxious to listen to them and hear what they happen to believe in and want out of life—apart from more money and power.

When a ghetto mother says *that,* says she wants to take up arms against the injustices of this society, political activists and intellectuals are likely to pay attention and (hopefully) be responsive; but when that same mother talks of her faith in God someone like me becomes embarrassed, dismisses her passionate convictions as superstitions or evidence of ignorance or "brainwashing" or "passivity." I do not deny that a certain kind of religious faith can be *palliative,* in the various senses of the word. But if we are condescending to the poor with respect to their "culture," their qualities as human beings and citizens (and in that regard many of us concerned with this nation's social problems are always examining and re-examining ourselves, aware that we may have blindspots) we can also be condescending so far as the religious faith of a Mississippi tenant farmer or Appalachian mountaineer or Harlem welfare mother goes. Frankly, most of us, people like me, tend to understand "unconscious dynamics" or political antagonisms or economic disparities, and well we should; yet, when we look at religious and philosophical viewpoints that are not ours, we tend to put them down in one way or another. Among many of the families I have worked with, religious faith is not "adaptive" (a sort of psychological accolade these days) or a contribution to political inertia or apathy, but an effort to understand the world, and find Something (Someone) believable, and also, a means of voicing all kinds of revolutionary passions—which, of course, might otherwise go unexpressed or get crushed.

During the Mississippi Summer Project [1964] a black field hand told me this: "The college students, they say that the churches dull you and make you feel satis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fied with the way things are. But I don't think they've ever read their Bible. They killed our Lord Jesus for fighting against the big people. He didn't say give in; He said fight them where they're wrong. What keeps us dull is the sheriff's guns and the Mississippi Highway Patrol's guns. What keeps our hopes going, what inspires us, what we believe in—that's what church is all about." Well, maybe at times I *do* overlook some of his lapses in reasoning, some of his flaws. Maybe I do romanticize him as I think about him and try to write about him. But I find in him an impressive mixture of religious devotion and political activism. Nor is he as unusual as some of us who think about "the poor" or from a distance advocate their "cause."

WHITE: Every denomination seems to have its caucus of "charismatic worship," and the latest media spectacle seems to be the "Jesus Freaks." I say "seems to be" because in spite of my ideological blinders—my need to see students in retreat from political action or social change, appropriating the vitality of the poor and the dispossessed just as another generation of consuming Americans appropriated the vitality of the Jews and very nearly appropriated the vitality of blacks—there is a quality about this movement, these actions, that is real; pathetic to me, but real nevertheless.

COLES: That is right, children of the upper-middle-class, including the academic and professional cadres, have their religious hunger, too. I say "hunger" because I believe we are driven to know the world and find our place in it. Maybe I should say we are driven to find God and find our place in His world. When that utterly human "need" is frustrated, denied, ridiculed, all sorts of "substitutes" arise—hence the sectarianism of the proudly godless, and hence the "answers," the "final explanations" so many of us in the liberal and radical intellectual world manage to find, only to discard and replace with new and more "definitive" replacements. No wonder some of our young people today throw their hands up in confusion and annoyance and return, in various ways, to the Bible, to churches, maybe churches different from ours, but still places of worship. How long can we be expected (can we expect our children) to believe in the atomic table, a three-car garage, as filled up as the house to which it's attached, and the revelations of yet another year of psychotherapy? I agree, no one in his right mind wants this world to turn its back on man's successes as a rational being who is able to fly to the moon and probe the unconscious and build assembly lines. And most of the world wants, *needs* more of that—food, housing, medical care, much of it tied to "technology." Still (excuse me for going back and forth all the time) there are things we can lose when we go ahead, things we have to go back and find again, or suffer if we do without them, or seek after in strange places and surprising ways.

WHITE: The wandering of a Bernanos or Agee or the young, the anguished search for something decent (Orwell's word), is your search too. Could you characterize your path, or what you've found?

COLES: Oh, I'm afraid I can't be very precise or respond satisfactorily. I've tried to get to know some people these recent years, some people I may not have been destined, by the social and economic "facts of life" of my particular life, to get to know. I've also tried to work alongside them, as a doctor, as someone who struggled with SNCC and CORE and the Appalachian Volunteers and a number of political organizing efforts in cities like Boston and Cleveland. I've tried to write about what I've seen and heard, and also, tried to say what I believe. But often I'm not sure what I believe, so maybe I come across as uncertain or mixed-up or hesitant or whatever. I don't like preaching at others, and I don't like to be preached at—not outside of church. Inside is another story.

But if I were to say whom I admire politically and spiritually, I think I could pull myself together and come forth with an answer that combines the directions of the mind and heart—Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement, and Simone Weil's religious and political struggle, as it comes across in *The Need for Roots* and *Gravity and Grace*. Often I wish I could be more sure of myself, be less doubtful religiously and politically. Often I wish I could spend my lifetime working in one of the Catholic Worker "hospitality houses," or perhaps trying to challenge the "powers and principalities" of this world more unreservedly, with more total political commitment—that is, a commitment unqualified by my interest in observing, taking note of contradictions or ironies, writing such things down, treating individual patients, some of them from "privileged" backgrounds, but nonetheless entitled to acknowledge pain and confusion and find out some things about themselves with the help of another person who has had a certain kind of "training."

But I am grateful to Daniel Berrigan for something he told me in the summer of 1970, when we talked while he was "underground." We agreed to disagree at times, as he put it, but we also agreed to assume certain shared values, and not go after one another abusively, question each other's right to travel in certain respects along our own particular roads.

Lord, I hope this *world's*, not just this country's, social and economic order one day sees an end to man's economic and political exploitation of man; but far off though even *that* day be, I fear there will be still other hazards and evils to contend with. One wants various things for all mankind, but more concretely, one prays for something kind and honorable to go on between oneself and one's next-door neighbor, however "like" or "unlike" me or you or so-and-so he and she happens to be.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SCREEN

In *Bad Company* a gang of boys do what Huck Finn always dreamed about: they light out for the territory. Drew Dixon (Barry Brown) is the only respectable, generally law-abiding one in the lot, though he is on the run from the new conscription laws passed to keep the Civil War going. In St. Joe, where he had hoped to get passage on a wagon train, Drew is hit over the head by reformatory bait named Jake Rumsey (Jeff Bridges). Jake and Drew meet again, however; and once they've settled their differences, Jake asks Drew if he'd like to "throw in with us." "Us" turns out to be Jake's little gang of delinquent run-aways and juvenile con men. As soon as Drew accepts Jake's invitation, the whole band sets out across the prairie, heading West to seek its fortune.

Bad Company has a good deal in common with previous scripts by the writing team of Robert Benton and David Newman. (Besides collaborating once again with Newman, Benton also makes his debut as a director here.) If *Bad Company* had been done before Benton and Newman's first great success, *Bonnie and Clyde,* it might be fair to say that the former anticipated the latter. Sometimes the gang of boys in this film seems to differ from the Barrow Gang only in having lived seventy years earlier and being ten years younger when their story takes place. Both films are set in a Midwest that is sparsely peopled and half-wild. Both are picaresque adventure stories. And both are about criminals who louse up half of the crimes they commit.

Bad Company departs from the pattern of *Bonnie and Clyde* primarily in the ending, which is like that of yet another Benton-Newman script, *There Was a Crooked Man. . . .* In that film a reforming prison warden finally turns to crime himself. In this one Drew gives up the middle-class values to which he has clung and at last participates in one of the robberies planned by Jake. This is not an embittered turn of events in either film. The filmmakers are only being realistic about the limitations of virtue, and expecting the same from their characters.

The Benton and Newman script gives structure to the boys' loose, disconnected story, and Benton's direction gives it style. Although it seems to the boys that they just wander haphazardly from one lot of bad luck to the next, from where we sit in the audience their story has two phases. The second mirrors the first—characters introduced earlier crop up again and incidents even reoccur—except that the second time around what had been mostly joshing in the first part of the film leaves a half dozen people shot or hanged. Benton's directional contribution to this development of the script comes, first and foremost, from his choice of location. After awhile the Flint Hills of Kansas, where the film was shot, take on a fantastic quality that is in fine, ironic counterpoint to the growing realism of the plot. Benton does a good deal to exploit this magical look of the location he has chosen.

A scene which constitutes the *rite de passage* between the two halves of the boys' story shows how well Benton and Newman's collaboration can work. Drew has been wounded and another boy killed during an escapade of mere chicken-stealing. When those left regroup, one of them decides to disband the gang, taking the horses and Drew's keepsake watch with him. But having pulled off this adult robbery at gunpoint, the departing boy allows Jake, who is in an impotent rage at being outdone, to engage him in a rock fight! Such mixing of child's play and man's work makes *Bad Company* a humdinger of a movie.

Movies about boys in trouble are an unacknowledged genre all its own. From *The 400 Blows* to *Hoa Binh,* from *If . . .* and *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* to *Dead End* and the granddaddy of all the juveniles, Vigo's *Zero de Conduit,* films about bad boys have developed a set of conventions as rich as the western or the horror film. For each of the last three years, the New York Film Festival has come up with a substantial addition to the genre. Last year it was *The Last Picture Show,* and this year it's *Bad Company.* In 1970 it was a film called *Kes* about a boy whose only escape from the misery of home and school is in the training of a falcon.

But for some reason, movies about *girls* in trouble have been neither so plentiful nor so memorable. The man who made *Kes,* British director Ken Loach, did a film about a girl in trouble a few years ago—it was called *Poor Cow*—and this year Loach has returned to the film festival with another contribution for the underdeveloped, distaff side of the genre. The film is called *Wednesday's Child,* and as everyone knows, Wednesday's child is full of woe. This child, Janice (Sandy Ratcliff), is a girl out of school, but still living at home with her parents. When she announces to her parents (Bill Dean and Grace Cave) that she has gotten pregnant, they insist she begin seeing a psychiatrist. This is the beginning of a process that leads her from being a psychiatric outpatient to voluntary committal, then involuntary shock treatment, psychiatric recidivism and at last full-fledged schizophrenia. Her first psychiatrist and her artist boyfriend try to rescue her from this downfall, but her horrid parents and the medical estate prevail against them.

Loach and scriptwriter David Mercer have put the film together in such a way that none of the seams in Janice's story shows. Her descent into madness appears to glide down a continuous, unswerving surface of events. When

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Janice first admits that she's pregnant, for instance, her mother urges abortion. But we hear nothing more about it until several scenes later, when Janice tells her boyfriend that her mother is trying to kill her. She's sure this is so, she says, because her mother has already killed her baby. Here as later in the film, especially at the points where Janice is committed and recommitted, the decisive action itself has been obliterated from the scenario. Janice's life is for us just an endless series of rancorous confrontations with her parents, her doctors and the sanitarium staff. This makes her fate seem an inexorable one.

As in *Kes,* Loach shows his real talent to be that of casting director. When he made the earlier film he had the people of Yorkshire, where the film was shot, play themselves. In this film he has used real mental patients, a practicing psychiatrist, and a Walthamstow housewife who portrays Janice's soul-stifling mother as if she were born to the role. But Loach's fondness for a semi-documentary approach is what finally undoes his film too, for he and Mercer have both handled Janice as if she were someone they were observing rather than creating. If the filmmakers had not tampered with any of the other roles in the film, they might have made their objective, superficial treatment of Janice look right. But they weren't objective about Janice's boyfriend and the good psychiatrist, both of whom are romanticized beyond belief. In the final analysis Loach and Mercer seem to have been less interested in Janice than in proving some of R. D. Laing's theories. Though the film is attempting to vilify an older school of therapy for its misuse of girls like Janice, the film's own use of her for a polemical purpose seems equally unkind and inadequate.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

VIETNAM NOVELS: FIRST DRAFT

BERNARD BERGONZI

To Defend, To Destroy
JAMES RESTON, JR.
Norton, $5.95

The Lionheads
JOSIAH BUNTING
Braziller, $5.95

Limbo
JOAN SILVER & LINDA GOTTLIEB
Viking, $6.95

War Year
JOE W. HALDEMAN
Holt, Rinehart, $4.50

The Weary Falcon
TOM MAYER
Houghton Mifflin, $4.95

War Games
JAMES PARK SLOAN
Houghton Mifflin, $4.95

TO write a war novel one needs more than just a war. Indeed, thinking of *War and Peace* or *The Red Badge of Courage,* one might say that a writer needn't have undergone a war at all as first-hand experience if he can achieve the right blend of history and imagination. And even the Vietnamese war, which has been observed and endured by thousands of young Americans of intelligence and education and literary sensibility, requires models and categories before it can be treated in fiction. So, reading a number of novels written around or about that war and published during the past couple of years, one is aware of the supportive influences: Crane, certainly, and the early Hemingway, and above all the major novels of World War II: *The Naked and the Dead* and *Catch-22.* The authors are highly responsive to the nuances of soldiers' speech, but they are also strikingly bookish; the names and quotations that occur in epigraphs and allusions would provide a good foundation for a Great Books course, which is one result of sending a well educated citizen army into a bad and unpopular war. If the enlisted men give expression to their feelings by endless and often subtle variations on standard modes of obscenity, the officers and more cultivated non-coms draw on their reading in literature and philosophy for other kinds of expression. At the same time, the general literariness is balanced by an impulse towards total documentary realism. On reflection, "realism" isn't really appropriate, since that itself is a literary mode: what one gets is documentation pure and simple: transcribed battle-plans full of copious and unintelligible detail, secret intelligence documents, letters and memoranda from government departments; even, in one case, an invented two-page extract from a book called *Flett's Register of Professional Soldiers of NATO Signatories.*

James Reston, Jr.'s *To Defend, To Destroy* is not set in Vietnam, but on the margins of the war, in Taiwan, Japan, Hawaii. It's an example of a kind of novel that emerged in the sixties: the spy story where the thrills of international espionage are swallowed up by bitter reflections about betrayal and the crudities of the power game. Mr. Reston's hero, Jonathan Bartlett, is a young officer in Army Intelligence; sometime student of philosophy and now proficient in Oriental languages. He does his job efficiently and happily, until he sends an idealistic anti-Communist Chinese whom he likes and admires to his death, in a bungled attempt to land an agent on the mainland. Thereafter Jonathan starts getting doubts. His

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

radicalized girl friend from the States turns up in Tokyo and introduces him to a revolutionary student group, and after long uncertainty Jonathan takes a decisive step against U.S. government interests, which leads to his inevitable downfall. The book tells a fairly predictable story in a capable fashion, well laced with quotations—from Yeats, Silone, Gabriel Marcel, Dostoievski, Koestler, Spender—and documents. But its moral dilemmas struck me as a bit pre-packaged, and its narrative smoothness not always distinguishable from blandness. The syntactical balance of its title is significant, and points to an ambivalence that recurs throughout these novels: defense is good, destruction is bad, but who can distinguish one from the other? The most agonizing conflict comes, as in Josiah Bunting's book, when one admires the traditions and spirit of the Army and yet loathes what it is doing in Vietnam. The sense of a painful balance is thrust home by Mr. Reston in his choice of Yeats' "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" as the epigraph to his book.

Limbo is too commercial to take very seriously, though it deals with a painful enough side-effect of the war: the plight of the wives of U.S. servicemen imprisoned by the North Vietnamese. Linda Gottlieb and Joan Silver have thoroughly researched the problem and packed their book with documents to prove it. The cast of pretty and/or brave wives are racked with appropriate emotions, and however much they suffer we are reminded that the situation has another side to it. Some of them go to Paris to contact the North Vietnamese delegation, and are shown a film of children mutilated in American bombing raids. The authors achieve their effects knowingly enough, but I found the whole book less affecting than any single paragraph of Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle* about how the wives of Stalin's political prisoners struggled, sometimes for years, to get news of their husbands. An unfair comparison, no doubt; but there is no real reason why *Limbo* should have been written as a novel. It is poised uneasily between the informative documentary

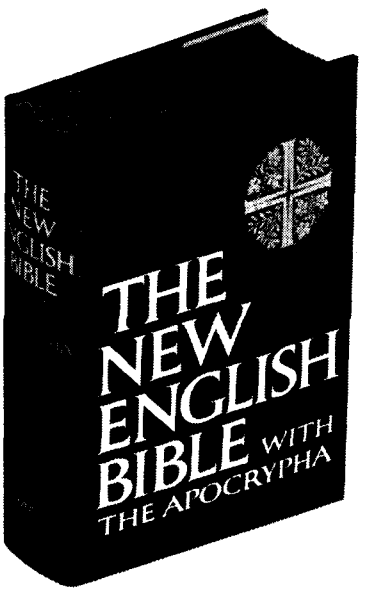
From OXFORD

Outstanding selections for reading and study

THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE

"The most successful modern language version I have seen. . . . Achieves modernity without sacrificing dignity."
— JOHN L. MCKENZIE, De Paul University

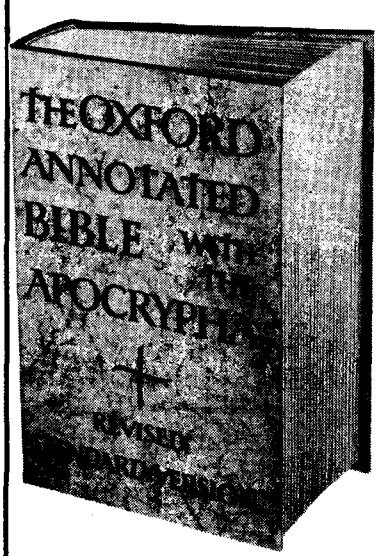
Published in 1970 to overwhelming acclaim, the complete NEW ENGLISH BIBLE has been chosen by nearly 2,000,000 readers. Enriched by the most recent biblical scholarship and enlivened by a fluent literary style, it has been widely hailed: "The best of all modern translations." — LOUIS CASSELS, *United Press International*. "I am highly pleased with THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE and endorse it enthusiastically." — PHILIP J. KING, St. John's Seminary



Shown here —
STANDARD EDITION
The Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha, 5¾ x 8⅝". Cloth, printed jacket. 5300A. $9.95

Also available —
LEXOTONE EDITION
The Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha, 5⁹⁄₁₆ x 8⅝". A popularly priced edition bound in durable Lexotone. 5120A. $4.95

Leather Editions with the Apocrypha from $14.95 to $25.00



THE OXFORD ANNOTATED BIBLE

WITH THE APOCRYPHA

Edited by HERBERT G. MAY and BRUCE M. METZGER

"A triumph. . . . It is also a testimonial to American biblical scholarship."
— *America*

Laymen and clergymen, teachers and students find this Bible invaluable for study and handy reference. Page-by-page annotations and notes clarify the more difficult passages; introductions to each book and to major divisions supply essential background; study helps include useful supplementary articles about the Bible and its setting, as well as 28 pages of full-color New Oxford Bible Maps with Index. 1,938 pages, 5¾ x 8⅝". Cloth, printed jacket. 08800A. $11.50

At your bookseller

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

survey which it might so easily have been, and the heartrending film which it is even now being turned into.

The remaining four books are set wholly in Vietnam. Tom Mayer's collection of short stories, *The Weary Falcon,* is unrelentingly sharp and sour and accurate in its accounts of army life in and on the fringes of battle. Mr. Mayer contents himself with telling it the way it is, without overt judgment, whether he's writing about flying in helicopters, or a woman Viet Cong agent being tortured for information, or an army medical orderly having unexpectedly to deliver a baby from a Vietnamese woman killed in a bombardment as she lay in labor (but there's no sentiment; the baby is born dead). "Telling it the way it is" can only be at best an ideal, since total objectivity is impossible for a human observer, located in culture and history, and I think the consciously detached manner of Mr. Mayer's stories is a less convincing attempt at this ideal than the unashamedly personal narrative of Joe W. Haldeman's *War Year.* To some extent Mr. Mayer's vision is influenced by the demands of the short story form itself, which cuts experience up, sharply and knowingly, into small disposable packages. But the long title story offers him more scope: the "weary falcon" is Captain Slade, a helicopter pilot with long service in the regular army who is killed after a heroic attempt to rescue a wounded comrade. Here feeling, sentiment even, seeps into the narrative, despite the deadpan manner. At the end Captain Slade, for all his dedication and heroism, is revealed to have had doubts about the war. A "weary falcon" is, after all romantic both in language and concept, and Mr. Mayer may have wanted to give his character something of the nobility and doomed poise of Yeats' Irish airman.

Josiah Bunting's *The Lionheads* is interesting because it is the work of a serving officer, and looks at the war from a more elevated point in the military chain of command than the other books. The "Lionheads" are the (fictional) Twelfth Infantry Division of the U.S. Army serving in the Mekong Delta in 1968, and the bad guy of the novel is their commander, General George Simpson Leeming; the good guy is one of his brigade commanders, Colonel George Robertson, a humane, intelligent, untidy officer of literary tastes and mildly rebellious temperament. Leeming loathes Robertson and resolves to destroy him. He orders Robertson to mount a river-borne landing in enemy-held territory, but denies him the helicopters to ensure its success. Against all the odds the attack succeeds, more or less, but Robertson's army career is still ruined by Leeming. It's a commonplace in literature that evil is often more interesting and attractive than virtue, and so it is with General Leeming; though a bad character in moral terms he is a very good character in fictional terms. He is an extremely able divisional commander, a martinet yet capable of immense charm; ruthless on occasion but not at all stupid. Indeed, he reads military history and once took an M.A. at the University of Pennsylvania (subject: "Integrated Tactical Nuclear Systems in Defense of Western Europe"). He keeps a small record collection of what he calls the "controlled romantic" composers, like Mendelssohn, Schumann, Schubert. But he is also a machiavellian, a schemer, insensately ambitious, and constantly concerned with his own advancement. Major Bunting has General Leeming nicely placed, not least linguistically, for he defines himself through his words. As when he is dressing down Colonel Robertson early in the story:

> "George, you've had the 1st Brigade three months and you haven't done a f-----g thing with it." It scans well, the way he says it, slowly and in cadence, not dropping the g. It is the educated man's way of being direct without sounding crude. And later, handing out decorations to wounded soldiers, he says, "Well, we're real proud of you, real proud."
>
> *Real proud,* Robertson thinks. The General says "really proud" or "really delighted" when he talks to his staff officers. With the troops he gets in that homey Shenandoah touch. *Real proud.* The man's a master.

Robertson himself is very conscious of verbal nuances; he reflects how the Army's habitual terminology acts as a medium for the distancing of real experience.

> The Army insists on its euphemisms, its circumlocutions, its depersonalization of language. "You individuals over there," bellows the sergeant-major. "Get busy and utilize these entrenching tools." That is, "dig." "We've got some real sophisticated new hardware, Mr. Secretary; it facilitates our operation." "Caspar Manley orchestrates forces better than any brigade commander in Vietnam. His people really impact on the enemy."
>
> The linguistic symphonies all have their codas, too, their summations. They are heavily percussive, and the players are the rankers and company-grade officers: "Zap that slope. Waste than gook. Use them up."

But though Robertson is full of perceptions, an embodiment of solid decency, and increasingly in revolt against the war, he remains, as a fictional character, obstinately inert and null. And much the same is true of Major Bunting's subsidiary good guy, a twenty-year-old private soldier, Paul Compella, who is mortally wounded in the river-borne landing. Once again, the energy flows through the nasty characters, like Sergeant Bromleo, who tells Compella and his buddy Provenzano, "You think because my name ends in a vowel like yours you're gonna get favors out of me your head's up your ass. You got that?"

Like Robertson, Major Bunting is acutely responsive to language and he is a marvelously accurate recorder. He provides masses of fascinating de-

---

BERNARD BERGONZI, *British critic and professor of English at the University of Warwick, is the author of* Heroes' Twilight: A Study of the Literature of the First World War. *His most recent works are* The Situation of the Novel *and* T. S. Eliot.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tail about the minutiae of military organization. But having devised a potentially great character in General Leeming he should have given him his head, and let the novel develop around him; instead, he imposed a well-meaning schematization on his story—opposing Leeming and Robertson as perverted and decent versions of the soldierly ideal—which seems to me have produced a disappointingly conventional piece of work. Admittedly, its stance is unusual, since it condemns the Vietnam war by ideal military standards rather than quasi-pacifist ones, but Major Bunting is inclined to make his points with rather too heavy-handed irony, like quoting the whole of Hopkins' sonnet "The Soldier" at the beginning of the chapter describing General Leeming's eventual departure from the Twelfth Division for even higher things.

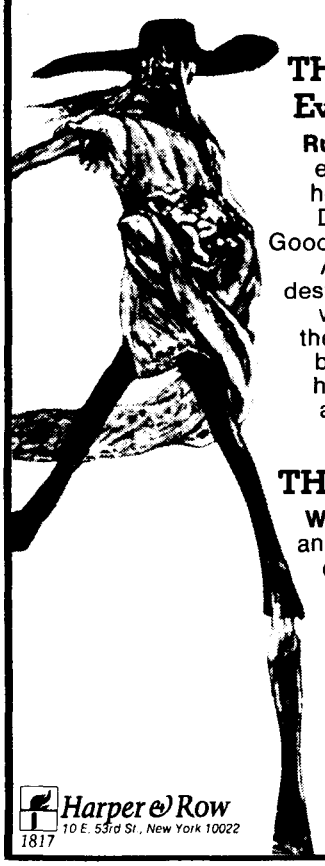
To my mind the two most rewarding and accomplished novels are James Park Sloan's *War Games* and Joe W. Haldeman's *War Year*. They have obvious things in common; they are both brief first-person narratives, with similarly terse titles. But in other respects they are interestingly contrasted: a powerfully direct narrative thrust in Haldeman as against obliquity and irony in Sloan. Haldeman tells the story of a nineteen-year-old Oklahoman's one-year tour of duty in Vietnam serving in the engineers; he sees a good deal of action, is twice wounded and survives. Two of his buddies are not so lucky. Hemingway looks like Mr. Haldeman's most obvious model, and that influence becomes too overt at the very end when the narrator, John Farmer, decides not to write to his dead friend's parents:

> I smoked a couple of cigarettes and then felt ashamed and got the letter out of the wastepaper basket and smoothed it out and put it in a safe place. But what I could tell them wouldn't help, them or me, so I never answered the letter and I told myself that New York was too far away to visit.

But mostly the narrative carries absolute conviction in its own terms; Mr. Haldeman catches the way serving soldiers talk and move and respond to each other with a fidelity that is harsh but never inhumane. There is something paradoxical in trying to use a word like "beautiful" of a text where there is so much blood and obscenity, but it somehow seems appropriate.

The narrator of *War Games* is very sophisticated, full of contemporary notions about the fictiveness of fiction. Whilst serving in Japan he deliberately volunteers for service in Vietnam, with the intention of seeing some action and writing what he calls the great war novel about Vietnam; he has already prepared himself by reading or rereading other war novels, like *A Farewell to Arms, All Quiet on the Western Front, The Red Badge of Courage.* (His own real model, though, is more like *Catch-22.*) But once in Vietnam he remains stuck in an office job for a long time, despite his demands to see some action: toothache and gonorrhea

Unlocking man's hidden dimensions



THE REALITY OF THE DEVIL
Evil in Man

Ruth Nanda Anshen. A noted philosopher and editor shows the error in the Judeo-Christian heritage in refusing to accept the fact that the Devil, or Evil, is equal in power to God, or the Good, but different in substance. In this book, Dr. Anshen reveals the Devil as a formidable but destructive ally if chosen rather than God. "Few writers would have the nerve to do a book on the Devil. Ruth Nanda Anshen has done it. The book, drawing on a remarkable knowledge of history and myth, is imaginative, provocative, and intriguing."—*Roger L. Shinn.* $6.95

THE NATURAL DEPTH IN MAN

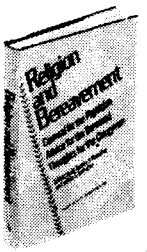
Wilson Van Dusen. Dreams, fantasies, altered and even psychologically "abnormal" states of consciousness are all keys to understanding the unexplored areas of the mind that make up our deepest selves. A clinical psychologist draws on his own experience, his work with mental patients, and Eastern and Western philosophy to help increase our awareness of this limitless source of beauty and wisdom. $5.95

Harper & Row
10 E. 53rd St., New York 10022
1817

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COPING WITH HUMAN MORTALITY

Books published for the Foundation of Thanatology, Dr. Austin H. Kutscher, Pres.



RELIGION AND BEREAVEMENT
Counsel for the Physician
Advice for the Bereaved
Thoughts for the Clergyman

"Our culture is not only affluent but also death-denying and death-defying: . . . The importance of acting out deep feelings through rites, rituals and ceremonials has special value when dealing with emotions that are too tense to be put into words."

From Chapter 1,
by Edgar N. Jackson, D.D.

An original, ecumenical anthology of religious, medical, and psychological approaches to bereavement. Viewpoints have been contributed by Baptist, Catholic, Congregational, Disciples of Christ, Episcopal, Jewish, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Unitarian, and United Church of Christ clergymen, as well as prominent doctors and laymen.

Also includes lists of: Musical selections for memorial services; Old & New Testament references to death and bereavement; and a landmark Survey of Opinion on the advice to be given by the clergy to the bereaved.*

1972 Jacketed ed. 350 pp. $12.50

For the Library

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS ON DEATH, BEREAVEMENT, LOSS AND GRIEF. 1935-1968.

1969 94 pp. Hard cover $10.00
Paper $ 4.95

Order from your bookseller or direct from the publisher. A 10% discount is offered when check accompanies order.

Health Sciences Publishing Corp.
453 Greenwich St.
New York 10013

**Reprints of these lists are available, with our compliments, by writing to Dept. CW.*

provide inadequate substitutes. Mr. Sloan's unnamed hero is casual, desensitized, bookish and mathematical, who is waiting for something to write his novel about:

> Have I begun inventing things? A man who goes to a war should return with tales to tell. God knows, I would like to take part in tellable stories. Is my life merging with my imagination?

He finds a kindred spirit in his commander, Colonel Rachow, a career officer and helicopter pilot. "After the war, he had taken a tour in 'systems', the new pseudo-science." Mr. Sloan is interested in systems and games, like writing novels and fighting wars, and Colonel Rachow even regards the whole Vietnam war as a huge simulation:

> Someone couldn't get his program straightened out, and it was decided that it would be cheaper to go ahead with real men. A macrosimulation. In fact, it might be the new graduation exercise. He was only surprised that it was held here rather than a deserted part of Nevada.

Colonel Rachow also knows his Yeats: he has two lines from "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" painted on his helicopter:

> Those that I fight I do not hate
> Those that I guard I do not love.

At length the unnamed narrator not only sees some action but plunges into it, horrifyingly. He goes out on patrol with a group of ARVN Rangers who start behaving with the utmost brutality in a captured enemy village. Whereat he shoots them dead and emerges from this enigmatic holocaust as, seemingly, the one heroic survivor of a deadly Viet Cong ambush, and is given a medal for his supposedly valiant fight. *War Games* is, indeed, a ferociously cynical book as well as an entertaining one. But the cynicism has nothing of the pose about it; Mr. Sloan makes us see it as the only possible response in a system or game where nothing is intelligible, but life has, somehow, to go on. Just as the novelist has, somehow, to go on to the end of his story. Mr. Sloan's narrator has not, certainly, produced a great novel about the Vietnamese war; but Mr. Sloan has written a slight but stylish version of the *nouveau roman* about it.

That great novel may, of course, even now be under way, but I doubt it. Great novels don't usually emerge from wars while they are still being fought: think how long Stendhal and, still more, Tolstoy waited before dealing with the Napoleonic campaigns. Even the important books about World War I—*All Quiet on the Western Front, A Farewell to Arms, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*—didn't appear until about ten years after it ended. Perhaps, if civilization and the novel last so long, the great novel about Vietnam will be written far in the future by a writer not yet born, and such books as the ones I have been discussing will be among his historical sources.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

JOHN DRUSKA

ON HER FOURTH BIRTHDAY

Jennifer, your eyes
are blue pinwheels

you hold up to me
as if I were the wind:

I turn your eyes, they turn
me through blue petals.

I call the air
the pinwheels hum

'Memory Birthday.'
Another year you may

recall how your eyes
learned to play it,

and from the garden
you've planted inside

yourself you may pick,
for example, my eyes,

green pinwheels
grown for you to spin.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS

Contemporary literary criticism: a kind of new theology?

The Contrived Corridor
HARVEY GROSS
U. of Michigan, $6.95

A Shaping Joy
CLEANTH BROOKS
Harcourt, Brace $7.95

CLAIRE HAHN

Cleanth Brooks and Harvey Gross offer literate readers a comprehensive view of the polarities of contemporary literary criticism. Cleanth Brooks, Gray Professor of Rhetoric at Yale, and author of many books on poetry, drama, fiction, and literary criticism, has been an effective force in instructing a generation of students to turn their attention from literary sociology to the literary work as such. For Brooks, "What the critic stresses is the meaning of the work as developed through its form and structure." Finding the label "New Criticism" inaccurate for his purposes, Brooks defines his work as "a structural or formal criticism, on the assumption that it is through literary form that the writer mediates his meaning."

Harvey Gross, on the other hand, explores how six writers—Eliot, Adams, Yeats, Pound, André Malraux, and Thomas Mann try "to understand or overcome history." Such divergent approaches submit a work of art to pressures which yield radically different insights. Which approach is more valid? I have no problem in rearming an old allegiance to Cleanth Brooks. His collection of twenty-two essays which range from "The Doric Delicacy" (1948), to "Faulkner as a Poet" (1968), demonstrates palpably the force of Brooks' lifetime effort to illustrate the importance of the kind of knowledge that literature gives. The critic, as Brooks conceives of him, is the closest ally of the artist. Both find the death of language to be serious. Although his criticism is formalist, Brooks is no less concerned about the "moral" value of literature than is Harvey Gross. "One of the uses of literature," Brooks points out, "is to keep our language alive—to keep the blood circulating through the tissues of the body politic. There can scarcely be a more vital function."

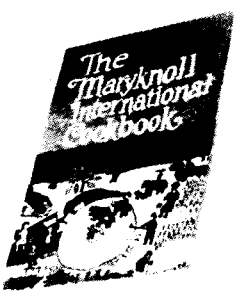
Perhaps, in the interest of fairness, I should come to terms with the problems I find inherent in Gross' critical method before offering my praises to Cleanth Brooks.

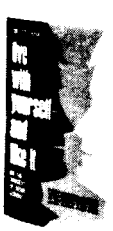
T. S. Eliot's *persona,* Gerontion, is man divorced from participation, cling-

ORBIS BOOKS
Maryknoll, N. Y.

New for fall

Letters from the Desert by Carlos Carretto. A book club selection, this highly personal, moving reflections on the meaning of God and many will capture the reader — mind, body and soul. **Hardbound $3.95**





Live With Yourself And Like It by Colette Hovasse. "Uptight" living today can be largely blamed on the fact we take ourselves too seriously. A French psychologist gives us a reliable and readable antidote. A "learn-to-laugh" book for busy executives, active students and harried housewives. — **$1.50**

Maryknoll International Cookbook. A collection of more than 200 recipes from every corner of the globe, collected by the Sisters while on mission assignment. Many recipes are originals — one of a kind rarely seen on restaurant menus and hardly ever described in other International Cookbooks. Marvelous gift for the kitchen adventurer. **Hardbound $4.95**

Available at your local bookstore or direct from Orbis Books.

ORBIS BOOKS
Dept. 6D, Maryknoll, N. Y. 10545

Please send me the following books.
Check enclosed ☐ Bill me later ☐

_____copies of "Live With Yourself And Like It" @ $1.50

_____ copies of "Maryknoll International Cookbook" @ $4.95 Hardbound

_____ copies of "Letters from the Desert" @ $3.95 Hardbound

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An unforgettable story of renewal . . .

GATHERED FOR POWER

Father Graham Pulkingham

In GATHERED FOR POWER Father Pulkingham movingly describes his experience of "the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," and how—from that time on—great changes were wrought in his parish and among its people.

The author dramatically recounts how the overwhelming presense of the Holy Spirit experienced by him and his parishioners gave them a stronger and firmer sense of the whole Church—Catholic, Evangelical and Pentecostal—and of her mission in and to the world. (Paperbound) $2.50

Please send check with order to:

MOREHOUSE-BARLOW COMPANY
14 East 41st Street
New York 10017

RESEARCH STUDY AID

— Furnished rent-free residences for scholar and family

— Interdisciplinary and theological research

— Ideal for professors on leave

— World's largest Benedictine Abbey

The Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research

at
ST. JOHN'S ABBEY and UNIVERSITY

invites applicants. Deadline for application January 1.

Write: Fr. Kilian McDonnell, Director
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Send for a Trial Subscription
17 Issues for $3
Return coupon from page 94

ing to life yet remote from life. He is an old man under sentence of natural death indulging in reverie. Gerontion is at the mercy of history, a lost prophet who can neither bear witness to his generation nor stir himself to fight annihilation with personal action. It is Gerontion's, modern man's, excursion into the "cunning passages, contrived corridors" of history that gives both title and structure to Harvey Gross' analysis of major literary works which form our modernist heritage. The double meaning of history—knowledge and process—and the various ways this meaning functions as an internal principle within literary works are Professor Gross' chief concern. As he acknowledges, such a reading of poetry and novels diverts attention from the work itself to what the work points at. What troubles me about Gross' sometimes brilliant, sometimes crotchety interpretations, is that his method ineluctably points at his own *Weltanschauung*. He makes value judgments about a work of literature depend upon whether an author's vision is apocalyptic or mediatory. Acknowledging that he gives more favorable attention to works which "seek the way of mediation," does nothing to restore balance to his distorted evaluation of writers who don't view history as Gross does.

Perhaps the greatest injustice is done to Pound whom Gross sees as "trapped in his ruined house of documents." Although most readers of poetry who have grappled in despair with the intricacies of the *Cantos* and who have been stunned with brilliant explications would welcome sane demythologizing, few are prepared for Gross' dismissal of Pound's History as "The Bunk." Ironically enough, just as I was brought up sharply against Gross' deflation of Pound, Hugh Kenner's *The Pound Era* arrived on my desk. Kenner wrenches the whole of the twentieth century, all "men of the Vortex"—Eliot, Joyce, Lewis, Yeats, Virginia Woolf, William Carlos Williams—into a labyrinth at whose secret heart sits Pound. Although Kenner's distortion of literary history is a *tour de force*, a showcase for his own talent, his astonishing, illuminating readings of aspects of Pound's *Cantos* makes Gross' judgment seem simplistic, even petulant.

The Contrived Corridor is a book with a thesis and like most good thesis-hunting, when it doesn't distort, it provides a perspective which offers unusual insights. Gross' reading of Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* through the lens of his thesis, that "certain works forming our modernist heritage may be interpreted as a body of prophetic knowledge," provides a sudden illumination not only of the novel but of the mind of the artist who has foreseen where we are now. Mann's hero, Aschenbach, was a writer whose work "seemed a citadel against anarchy." But two years after *Death In Venice* was published "the demons were loose all over Europe." Mann, like Aschenbach, was able to sense the spiritual direction of his times. His prevision in a time of crisis helped him to speak for and to his contemporaries, to assert that History is a process "which periodically runs out of control."

But if Mann fares well from Gross, few others do. His vision is essentially reductive. He looks through the large end of the telescope and great landmarks of literature are diminished to small plots of land, summarily analyzed, dismissed. Even Eliot who walks the "painful way of mediation" with Mann, receives only a kind of nervous approbation. Eliot's economic anti-Semitism (as does Adam's and Pound's) makes Gross skittish about what the poet says. In fact, Gross' particular brand of humanism conditions his attitude toward each work of literature he analyzes. New Criticism becomes a kind of New Theology.

Yeats, although his myth of Eternal Recurrence is part of his apocalyptic attitude towards History, appeals to Gross almost against his will. The power of Yeats' symbolic system, his metaphor for history which provides a form for experience, moves Gross to admiration. The author's analysis of "The Gyres" and "The Second Coming," albeit always within the limitations of his thesis, are remarkably perceptive.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So sensitive, in fact, is Gross to the work of art itself, I can only regret that he turned his attention elsewhere. The author is a poet with a sound knowledge of his craft. His comments on rhythm and tone are often incisive, especially when he deals with Eliot and Yeats.

The Contrived Corridor ought to be read by serious students of modern literature if only for the challenge of facing up to the vagaries of a first-class creative intellect testing out the contrived corridors of another discipline.

It is precisely the discipline of Cleanth Brooks' criticism, his respect for the work of art itself, which helps him to see so clearly what the work points at—Harvey Gross' goal. For example, in the essay "American Literature: Mirror, Lens or Prism?" Brooks distinguishes between the "lens" of James Baldwin in *Blues for Mr. Charlie* and the special mirror or prism of Eudora Welty in "A Piece of News." Both artists are concerned to depict the poor white of the contemporary South. But "the very speeches that Baldwin puts into the mouths of his white characters betray their bookish unreality. They don't even talk like poor whites." Whereas Eudora Welty's story—and it is Brooks' careful analysis of the language of the story which reveals this—tells us something valid about "where we are now." Harvey Gross contends and asserts; Cleanth Brooks demonstrates that the artist can indeed be a prophet immersed in the process of history. As he says in a delightful discussion of Poe as "An Interior Decorator," the author might not only have been infected but he might have diagnosed rather accurately the cultural malaise of his day and "even had intimations as to the ultimate outcome of the disease."

A Shaping Joy is a showcase for the range of Cleanth Brooks' work. From analysis of two of Wordsworth's early poems to a discussion of Joyce's *Ulysses,* the master's scalpel does not falter. Some may think it not quite just to set an established critic next to a relative newcomer. But there are so many new-new critics hacking away at the giant. It is a sheer delight to see that he still stands, that his principles are just, that they can and do "expose once more the living fibers of the imagination so that men might once again see who they are and where they were."

Books for children mailed everywhere
THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT
Send $1 for catalogue
321 S. Ashland Ave.
Lexington, Ky. 40502

A Book of Change

FREDERICK MORGAN

Scribner's, $6.95

JOHN FANDEL

Euclid has taught all of us more formally what life, apparently less axiomatically, teaches: the whole is equal to the sum of its parts and is greater than any one of them. Frederick Morgan is the Euclid of his first book of poems and proves the whole of it in parts that are, nevertheless, often sustained occasions of smaller great wholes. His long sequences are composed of parts that remind us of those integrities Euclid by no means underrated. Parts can be great in themselves; that they are makes their participation in fuller wholeness possible—unavoidable. When the wholeness is life understood in its summations of partial experiences, then the greatness is the fullest understanding, a holiness. So by myth and parable, by direct hard plain talk, through suffering toward joy and peace, the resignation only come to by undergoing, that kind of overcoming, Frederick Morgan, in his search for the self, in his search for a language —how far can one go in words; as far as experience?—in his searchings-out of form, from the loosest to the strictest, syllabic count to cadenced prose, conducts us through his own changes to the contemplation of the myth of our own lives, our own destinies. Thus poetry comes to be: from particulars of a peculiar selfhood to the universality of the heart and mind of man—

"An absorbing study of the contemporary Roman Catholic scene"*

THE RENEWAL OF AMERICAN CATHOLICISM
BY
DAVID J. O'BRIEN

"His book has particular merit since he is not only an astute commentator on what is going on in contemporary Catholicism, but has placed this in the perspective of the history of Catholicism in the United States. He thus provides not mere impressionistic sketches of the current ferment in the Catholic scene, but shows in very engaging and solid fashion how the present currents were formed, and the sources from which they have sprung. He also shows, in a way few other similar studies have shown, how the radical social protest of contemporary Catholics is to be seen within the total sweep of the Catholic panorama. The book is thus useful not only as a portrait of changing currents in the Catholic scene, but also as a picture of widespread currents on the American scene as a whole."
—*Robert McAfee Brown
$7.95

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PHOTO BY JILL KREMENTZ

Rollo May

The new book by
the distinguished author of
LOVE AND WILL
is challenging, timely and
highly important

POWER AND INNOCENCE

A SEARCH FOR THE SOURCES OF VIOLENCE

At all bookstores, $7.95

Norton

55 Fifth Ave./New York 10003

Classified

RATES: 50c a word, one time; 48c, three times; 45c, seven times; 42c, thirteen times. Twelve words minimum. For box numbers add 50c per insertion. Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times. COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Christmas Cards

● CHRISTMAS CARDS. Colorful, exciting, Christocentric, liturgical. Send 35c for 16 samples or $1.50 for 16 samples with envelopes. SEMINARY PRESS, Dept. C, Box 16032, St. Louis, Mo. 63105.

Correctional

● RELIGIOUS PROGRAM for inmates and ex-inmates of Eastern New York Correctional Facility. Contributions needed. Rev. William M. O'Brien, Box 466A, Napanoch, N.Y. 12458.

Magazine

● MARRIAGE, a magazine published monthly for husbands and wives. One year introductory subscription, $2.97. Sample copy sent on request. Write to: Room C, MARRIAGE Magazine, St. Meinrad, Indiana 47577.

Rehabilitation

● GREAT NEED for new or used, matching or odd men's socks. St. Vincent de Paul Rehabilitation Center, 1,500 clients a day. Address packages: Thomas F. Cassidy, 231 Winston St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90013.

Spanish

● LEARN SPANISH IN MEXICO. If you really want to learn Spanish intensively and economically, start any Monday at CIDOC. For catalog on language school and de-schooled academy, write: CIDOC, APDO 479, Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Will Forms

● PROTECT YOUR FAMILY. Four blank will forms, only $2. Order today. DARRELL KINCAID, P.O. Box 381, Dept. 4C, Lafayette, Ind. 47901.

that is, poetry when it is not simply the autobiography of phases of a life, one's fickle conversions, so often the limitation of a collection.

One might wonder how Morgan's collection conveys so much and avoids the triteness of incompletion until one realizes he has let his book mature. This is no automatic *poems from-to* collection. It has waited upon perspective, not just a point of view. And perspective is not something learned as easily as syllabic-count or free verse. If it can be learned at all, it is not something studied into being. It comes with the gift of understanding and that is not available at whim, an A & P commodity. Without suffering, nothing. But who seeks suffering in order to study perspective? Morgan has embraced it. He tells us in monosyllabic strengths: suffering is the way to wisdom. He tells us in conversational ease: by chance come the changes qualifying a life. He tells us in perfected stresses: our encounters are revelations. He tells us with intensity, in vital affirmations, of our mystical body of being. Versed in mysticism, not misty in his verses, he affirms splendid truths: the salvation of self is other, the creator brims in the created, being is ever becoming; but his affirmations are not silly optimisms. The patience of meditation, for contemplation, only, leads to penetration; without contemplation, there is no true action: enlightenment is their union. He tells us more, going from an instance to an eternity, the evolution of the self in being, the analogies of things to the existence of thought. A general review can not tell all he tells, and a reviewer might "learn for a time the wisdom of not doing," in reviewing the whole. But let it be said he is one on whom nothing has been lost, who has become enlightened and therefore can enlighten.

Single lines can be, however, telling. Parts are touchstones of wholes. If taken out of greater contexts, nonetheless they stand for insights and indicate fuller revelations. Delineating lines of the tulip does not spoil the tulip as long as the tulip is capable of being seen whole, is not merely (if there is such a word) a gilded lily. Sample: Down beneath, at the root of things, we are together; ripples and cross-ripples on the one mighty ocean; some force that shapes us all, bears us through all—But these lead me to whole poems, some written with the vision of a Saint, or upon the credence of a Sage with a Mystic's privilege. And there are lines I like for the simple beauty of themselves: while the sun-drenched Rose luxuriously distends; silent beneath the dwarf hemlock in a dawning; the smooth topaz insects clenched to the dry salt stalks; lavish their majesty of darkened knowledge; lamps are aglow in the calm windows. But even these might seem singly a collage of sensibilities, and this sequence has "emblems of pure song prouder than all sound." Single lines, however telling, may startle us into a secondary admiration: we pause to breathe again. The primary admiration must be the greater body: the poem; the greater whole: the sequence of poems; the greater reality: the "one life," the words which begin and end one poem, "its extremes and every point between," the life Morgan so generously shares, his realizations a resolution of it, and ours.

Life is a pilgrimage, and its image ought to be an Odyssey, not a day-trip, a pat travelogue, a Cook's Excursion. The changes of a life ought to be great changes, not little variations in modes of behavior, fine points in stylistics. Morgan has taken "change after change" showing the range of them through the range of his poems—his only boundaries are universal—a seasoned traveler in time into eternities. There is a passionate peace in his resolutions; he has ridden the risk of realities. He has come through beautifully resigned, joyous. The buffetings have not bruised his spirit. That is why he is such a marvelous traveling companion, one we can gladly go along with toward something finer than a localized grievance, ripping against the grain of contemporary beefings, toward great being, "where the First Persons dwell," "where beasts and angels are at home." The last word of his epic is "lives." I read it as a verb and a noun.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Flannery O'Connor: Voice of the Peacock

SISTER KATHLEEN FEELEY

Rutgers University Press, $9

The Christian Humanism of Flannery O'Connor

DAVID EGGENSCHWILER

Wayne University Press, $8.95

CHARLES A. BRADY

One of the mythological explanations of the gorgeous suns lighting up the peacock's tail is that they are the hundred eyes of the giant Argus. One may also think of them as the spectacles of the myriad critics training their burning glasses on the Flannery O'Connor who saw John and Ezekiel's archangels-as-totem poles in her peacocks' outspread fans, who wanted Hera's bird to be Christ's also without ever ceasing to be Hera's, whose own comic voice could be as raucous harsh as the ornamental fowl she so unaccountably kept. It is an essential part of this cautionary tale that the god Hermes, patron of gamblers, artists, and human souls, should have sealed the giant's eyes with a story he could not understand, a fate which has overtaken all too many critics of America's finest short story writer since Hemingway.

Her two most recent critics, both rewarding, neither major, share a common assumption: that, as Caroline Gordon has it, theology is "the bedrock on which her achievement rests." They both accept her statements about her art at their face value, disregarding Lawrence's great dictum: "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale." Professor Eggenschwiler, for example, speaks of Miss O'Connor's "demonstrating that religious mysteries and illuminations have their consequences . . . in the natural world." It is a fact she accepts. But, at her best, she does not demonstrate it. She *tells* it in the shape of an exceedingly complex, densely textured tale.

Sister Kathleen, who has had access to the personally annotated books in Flannery O'Connor's study, extracts some gratifying insights from these sources. She quotes from a published letter that casts a good deal of light on her special vision of prophecy: "He [Aquinas] says prophecy depends on the imaginative and not on the moral faculty." Eggenschwiler's tauter volume limits its more concentrated focus to what he calls her "Christian humanism," which no one can deny she possessed, though it seems a singularly bland phrase for communicating any vivid sense of her knotted, straining genius. It is a little misleading, too, to speak of "the fully integral universe of Miss O'Connor's fiction." As is true of the word of almost any obsessed writer, hers tends to be, rather, an intensely realized *narrow* universe. "It is the business of fiction to embody mystery through manners," she wrote once. Even though Eggenschwiler deliberately confines his emphasis to the elucidation of spiritual "mystery" rather than sociological "manners," the sociology not only remains important but is inseparable from the "mystery." As Miss O'Connor put it in defense of her grotesques: ". . . the South . . . is most certainly Christ-haunted . . . Ghosts can be very fierce and instructive. They cast strange shadows. . . ."

They do indeed. When Eggenschwiler moves away from the almost too obstructive philosophic scaffolding of the first part of his book—Kierkegaard, Tillich, Sartre, *et al.*—he writes really admirable exegetical commentary on those "strange shadows," especially as they appear in the greater short stories; and it is clear that her *Complete Stories,*

Father Daniel Berrigan
speaks of his seventeen months in prison . . . his spiritual growth during that experience . . . his continuing commitment to the resistance movement . . . his brush with death . . . the Harrisburg conspiracy trial of his brother and others . . . and his hopes for America in the future. A remarkable spiritual and human document.
Absurd Convictions, Modest Hopes
CONVERSATIONS AFTER PRISON
with Lee Lockwood
$7.95, now at your bookstore
RANDOM HOUSE
Photo: Paul Petricone

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which won this year's National Book Award, is an incomparably greater volume than either of her powerful but flawed novels.

We are all theologians nowadays; and both Pofessor Eggenschwiler and Sister Kathleen do the theological turn very well. However, in the long run, what criticism will have to grapple with is the "wild . . . violent and comic" note which she once cited as the hallmark of all her fiction. For she is essentially a comic writer embodying her own stated credo that "the maximum amount of seriousness admits the maximum amount of comedy." Commenting on her "innate comic spirit," Sister Kathleen adduces Miss O'Connor's testimony that it was the humorous Poe who "first inspired her to think of a writing career," an ironical circumstance when one thinks of Poe's cold facetiousness being converted into the burning bush of her fiction. Eggenschwiler's tactic is to relate her moral impact to classic comedy's "pattern of symbolic death and rebirth, a completed redemptive action" with an "expulsion of a boasting pretender."

The specific violence of her comic spirit is at once a truism and a stumbling-block. Robert Giroux has recorded how its savagery shocked those specialists in *Galgenhumor*, the Germans, who are also specialists in a quality not to be found in her incandescence: sentimentalism. (Though I once thought there was, there is no real cruelty in her humor—it's as if some irritable angel were observing something that cannot be helped.) The most valuable pronouncement on it that I know comes from a recent book which makes no reference to her whatsoever. In the second volume of his memoirs, *Midnight Oil*, V. S. Pritchett speaks of his own short story practice, one that has something in common with hers:

> My opinion was and is . . . that the essence of comedy is not funniness but militancy. I have rarely been interested in what are called "characters," i.e., eccentrics; reviewers are mistaken in saying I am. . . . I am interested in the revelations of a nature and (rather in Ibsen's fashion) of exposing the illusions or received ideas by which they live or protect their dignity.

Out of all the shattering Christ-paradoxes the one that chose her was the God-man's violence. Though she reverses his effect, Mark Twain would have understood. Twain laughed God out of the American imagination; she laughs God in. She realized that the face of good could be grotesque and that the grotesque, merging into beauty, was her vocation. It is peacock-eyes, not the eyes of T. J. Eckleburg, which light up the red earth of her beloved Protestant Georgia, a ground too human for her ever to have thought of it as a wasteland. Perhaps criticism should emulate the example of the old Negro woman who, when one of Flannery O'Connor's peacocks spread its burnished, planetary tail, cried out: "Amen! Amen!" And let it go at that.

How to subscribe to Commonweal

Just complete this coupon and mail to

COMMONWEAL
232 Madison Ave.,
New York, N. Y. 10016

☐ One year, $14
☐ Two years, $26
☐ 17 issues trial, $3
☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me

Name

Address

City, State, Zip 10–27–72

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

REVIEWERS

CLAIRE HAHN is an assistant professor of English at Fordham University.

JOHN FANDEL is *Commonweal*'s Poetry Editor. A new collection of his poems, *Body of Earth*, has just been published.

CHARLES A. BRADY is a professor of English at Canisius College and a book columnist for the *Buffalo Evening News*.

PASTOR RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS is an associate editor of *Worldview* and the author of *In Defense of People* (Macmillan).

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J., is assistant editor of *Commonweal*.

The Car Thief

THEODORE WEESNER

Random House, $6.95

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

Even before the nostalgia industry began exploiting the 1950s, that was the world to which some of us returned to sort out the youthful fantasies and decisions which, we persist in believing, had something to do with where we are down to now. In that world the automobile was both place and object of our dreaming, as I suppose it still is for those later born to the magic of Detroit's manufacture. At the wheel in fulfillment of power, on backseats in proof of lustful prowess, under the hood in frustrations of mechanical ineptitude. Of course the places of fulfillment, proof and frustrations were sometimes switched about, but they all gravitated around the Car. The Car was home and altar, laboratory and battlefield. It is hard to recall the point at which it began to be just a means of transportation.

Theodore Weesner's Alex Housman is just sixteen and stealing his fourteenth car, a '59 Buick Riviera. Alex motorized his dreams in his hometown of Detroit, or maybe Flint. No matter, each is an overgrown machine shop with endless square blocks of tool and die making; each is oppressed and liberated by the chrome and paint and sexualized horsepower, by the Car which is Alex's portable oasis in a drab and finally desperate boyhood. He does not steal cars to keep them, nor to sell them, nor to strip them. He steals them to live, if only for a few hours, in someone else's world. The Car is refuge from the embarrassments of lower-class existence in a not very good part of town, from the erratic generosity of Curly, an alcoholic father incapable of handling his love for a son he dare not understand.

I might as well tell the rest. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mother is divorced and remarried, living with Alex's brother Howard at a Michigan lakeshore resort. Curly dies, but not before Alex serves time in what we continue to call reform schools, and not before Alex tries a semester's return to normalcy at high school, an experiment doomed by the suspicion of his peers—well founded, as it turns out—that Alex has been robbing gym lockers during basketball practice. To the surprise of his secret yearnings, pretty Irene Schaeffer encourages Alex, but she too fails to draw him from his unremitting aloneness. At the end of the book it appears the Army might have some use for his scarred but surviving solitude.

The Car Thief is really not much of a story, and is thus painfully true to those years when most of us, were truth to be told, felt ourselves excluded from the wonderland of Being Young in America. It is the only story Alexes have, and Weesner tells it superbly well. The smells and forbidden vagaries of locker room jock straps and showers. Walking by homes on better streets where pure girls lived another kind of existence, but not daring to ring the bell. Embarrassed by a father who founders in his efforts to be a pal. Savoring carefully nurtured resentment against the self-righteous injustices of cops and teachers who refuse to risk the remembrance of youth.

There are, I suppose, no great lessons to be drawn. To politicize the story is to trivialize it. It is not about capitalist alienation or repressive tolerance. I suspect locker room anxieties are much the same in a socialist state. Nor does Weesner score moral points. Perhaps today's Alex comes across the Jesus Movement and discovers potency in stolen religious experience rather than stolen Buicks. It makes a difference, no doubt, but not as much as some may think. Novels as fine as *The Car Thief*, and novelists as gifted as Weesner, give us courage to confront the commonality of our lives. Only then can we graduate from stealing the experience of Life.

For Libraries:
Commonweal on Microfilm

More than 1,200 College, School and Public libraries use the microfilm edition for reference in this complete and compact form. Commonweal subscribers may purchase current and past volumes at the following prices:

November, 1924 to March, 1960
4-volume sets (2 years), $22.50 each
Current volumes, March 1960 to date, $5.75 a year (2 vols.)

Address orders and inquiries to:

Xerox University Microfilms
300 N. Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106

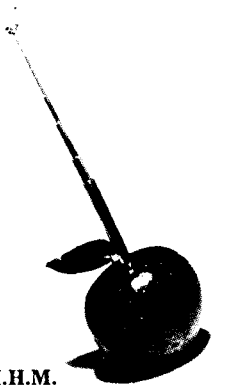
IN BRIEF

WORKING THROUGH: A TEACHER'S JOURNEY IN URBAN UNIVERSITY *by Leonard Kriegel, Saturday Review Press, $6.95.* There are too few good books on the experience of college teaching. Perhaps the so-called "scholarly" competitiveness and hyper-critical atmosphere in some faculties alienates teachers from their classroom experiences and frightens them out of talking about how they themselves have grown. At the same time, any man who could be intimidated out of writing about himself for fear of faculty criticism could never become a great teacher.

It is too early to tell whether Leonard Kriegel will become a great teacher—he is barely forty and he has been teaching only fifteen years. Perhaps ten years from now he will be mumbling this year's insights out of yellowed notes or playing to the crowds, giving easy Bs and assuring each new generation it is more beautiful than the last.

I doubt it. This autobiographical memoir of his journey from Hunter College ('55), through Columbia's sterile and stylish sycophancy, through the warm mediocrity of N.Y.U., to the —in retrospect—nightmarish and emotionally exhausting riots of the mid-sixties and the social revolution of Open Admissions at CUNY discreetly exposes the character of a man who—at least in his book—gives students what few men in New York seem ready to give one another: respect.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH



By Sr. M. Michael, I.H.M.

ELECTIVES FOR REVITALIZING HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION

This noted educator and author presents a Christ-centered and Scripture oriented high school religion program utilizing electives and mini-electives and based on the method of laboratory instruction, team teaching and student involvement. Of great value is the well-researched and up-to-date resource materials section including suggestions as to how they can best be implemented. $4.95, ppr.

By Henri Rondet, S.J.

ORIGINAL SIN:

The Patristic and Theological Background

An expert in theology at Vatican II sets down the basis of a theological hypothesis which is probably the best exposition concerning original sin to have appeared to date. $4.95, ppr.

Edited by George Devine

THAT THEY MAY LIVE:

Theological Reflections on the Quality of Life

Daniel Callahan, Charles Curran, Robert Faricy and 14 other experts consider the quality of life from ethical, scriptural, professional and theological aspects. $3.95, ppr.

BREAKING THE BREAD: Homilies on the "B" Cycle of Readings for Sundays and Holy Days, By Charles E. Miller, C.M., Oscar J. Miller, C.M. and Michael M. Roebert. $3.95, ppr.

UNTIL HE COMES: Sermon Outlines for the Weekdays of Advent. By Charles E. Miller, C.M. and John A. Grindel, C.M. $2.50, ppr.

write for free catalog 0365

alba house

alba house

DIVISION OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL
2187 VICTORY BLVD.
STATEN ISLAND, N. Y. 10314

IN CANADA PALM PUBLISHERS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lend me the stone strength of the past . . .

OUR AMERICAN CATHOLIC HERITAGE

by Father Albert J. Nevins, M.M.

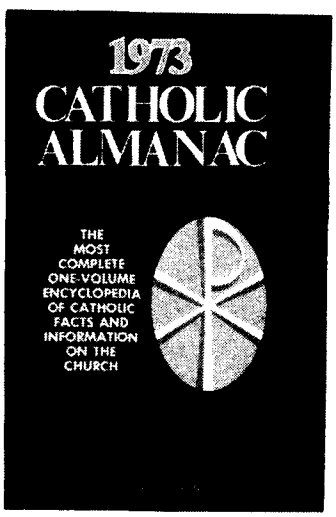
The stories of Catholic men and women who have made significant contributions to the development of the United States. Its 382 pages contain 479 illustrations, 258 of them in color. Written in conversational style, OUR AMERICAN CATHOLIC HERITAGE is great for yourself or as a gift for friends, relatives, parish workers, or benefactors.

Comes with durable, protective slipcase.

Regular price: $20.00

SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION PRICE: $13.95 (good only through Dec. 15, 1972)

. . . and I will lend you
The wings of the future, . . .



1973 CATHOLIC ALMANAC

edited by Father Felician A. Foy, O.F.M.

The most current, complete, single book of Catholic facts available. Contains statistical information, biographies of prominent Catholics, lists of Catholic organizations and retreats, statements and reports on contemporary, relevant subjects such as Church finances, the environment, abortion. And much, much more.

The 1973 CATHOLIC ALMANAC is the only book of its kind, indispensable for the complete Catholic library.

Cloth $7.95 Paper $3.95

. . . for I have them. — Robinson Jeffers

Both books available at your bookstore or by returning the coupon below.

Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., Noll Plaza, Huntington, Indiana 46750

Gentlemen,
Please send me:

_____copies of OUR AMERICAN CATHOLIC HERITAGE, No. 838 ..... @ $13.95.
(Special pre-publication price good only through December 15, 1972.)

_____copies of the 1973 CATHOLIC ALMANAC, cloth, No. 845 ..... @ $7.95.

_____copies of the 1973 CATHOLIC ALMANAC, paper, No. 814 ..... @ $3.95.

☐ Enter the above as my standing order for the CATHOLIC ALMANAC, to be filled each year as published.

Payment enclosed $_____ (we pay postage and handling): payment must accompany orders under $5.00.

☐ Bill me (postage and 50¢ handling additional).

Name _____
(please print)

_____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

c1127

412

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED